

FINAL

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
HONOLULU LABORATORY RENEWAL PROJECT
PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Project Description	2
1.2 Project Setting	3
1.3 Goals of the Public Involvement Plan	3
2.0 KEY ISSUES	4
3.0 KEY COMMUNITY PARTICIPANTS	4
4.0 THE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN	5
4.1 Background Materials	5
4.2 Newsletters	5
4.3 Community Open Houses (Public Information Meetings)	6
4.4 Presentations to Selected Officials, Agencies and Boards	7
4.5 Monitoring the Media	7
5.0 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN	7
5.1 Implementation Plan	7
5.2 Project Team Members' Responsibilities	8
5.3 Schedule	9
5.4 Documentation	9
APPENDIX A. PARTIES TO BE CONSULTED IN EA DEVELOPMENT	10

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is proposing to renovate or replace the NMFS Honolulu Laboratory facilities. NOAA has hired consultants to conduct an environmental review of the proposed project alternatives and to develop conceptual plans for the facility. Due to the scope of the project and the fact that it is being proposed by a federal agency, an environmental review of the project will be conducted under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. This process is intended to coordinate federal, state, and local agency, other organizations and public review of a project. As part of this review process, an Environmental Assessment (EA) will be prepared to describe project alternatives, disclose environmental impacts and mitigation measures, and document the review process. This Public Involvement Plan (PIP) is designed to ensure an optimum level of public involvement during environmental review and conceptual design.

The PIP is not a public relations plan. There is a fundamental difference between public relations and public involvement. Public relations is a process through which public opinion or perception is shaped. The object may be an agency, a project or plan, an event (positive or negative), a person, etc. Information flows in one direction. The information is presented in such a way as to lead the receiver of the information to the desired (sender's) conclusion. Public involvement is intended to increase public knowledge and understanding of complex issues, consult with interested and affected parties during planning and decision-making, and develop consensus. Information flows two ways. According to NOAA's "Environmental Review Procedures" (NAO 216-6) project proponents must ensure that public concerns are adequately considered in project development. This implies feedback. Further: "[S]coping and public involvement may be satisfied by many mechanisms, including planning meetings, public hearings, and requests for comment on public hearing documents, discussion papers, and other versions of decision and background documents." Comments received must be considered, and when appropriate given the constraints of project objectives, budget, location, etc., the project itself changed to accommodate legitimate concerns. The essence of public involvement is dialog, but it is also dialog with the possibility of (and responsibility for) consequent action.

This PIP identifies the issues that are likely to be raised during review of the project, potentially interested parties that will be included in the public involvement program, and the measures that will be used to involve interested parties in the review process. Because it is possible that new issues will arise or other interested parties will surface during the project, the public involvement process must be capable of responding to emerging circumstances as the process unfolds. The capability to respond to emerging circumstances resides in the PIP's flexibility to reformat background materials in response to newly identified issues and to disseminate that information through newsletters, open houses, focused meetings or other types of contact.

1.1 Project Description

The primary facility in this study is the existing Southwest Fisheries Science Center Honolulu Laboratory, located on the University of Hawaii (UH) Manoa Campus. The laboratory building and two warehouse-like support structures (Annex I and Annex II) were originally constructed in the 1950s. The buildings, portions of which are severely overcrowded, have been remodeled a number of times. They continue to serve as the primary research facilities and base of operations for Southwest Fisheries Science Center personnel stationed in Honolulu. The two-story laboratory provides approximately 1238 square meters (sm) [13,325 square feet (sf)] of net office, laboratory, and support space. The two annex buildings contribute another 1532 sm [16,500 sf]. The property totals approximately 0.9 hectares [2.2 acres].

In addition to the “no action” scenario required to be analyzed by NEPA guidelines, there are two development scenarios: renovation of and addition to the existing structures, and construction of a new facility.¹ For either development scenario, program projections call for a net area of 6429 sm [69,200 sf], which is estimated to require a gross building area of 8305 sm [89,400 sf]. Two- and three-story stacking plans were developed and reviewed, but the limited building area at the site drives the design of either an addition or a new building to the three-story configuration. Either development alternative will cost in the range of \$40-50 million.

In the renovation scenario, a new three-story, 6491-sm [69,870-sf] building will be constructed over a new basement parking level on the rear portion of the site currently occupied by Annex I and Annex II, and connected to the existing laboratory building on the south side. The third floor of the new structure will extend over the second floor of the existing building. The existing laboratory building will be renovated with the central courtyard area also developed into new office space. The estimated parking requirement for this scenario is 130-135 spaces in two levels of underground parking. Access will be through the existing East-West Center (EWC) easement to a ramp about mid-way along the west side of the new combined building.

In the new building scenario, the required gross building area will be the same as for the renovation scenario, although more efficient use of the site may be possible by not having to build around the existing laboratory. The estimated parking requirement for this scenario is also 130-135 spaces, but only one underground level is required. Access to the underground parking will be from Dole Street. The existing EWC easement will only be used by visitors to access a limited number of at grade visitor parking spaces.

Service access for either alternative will be from Pope Road to the rear of the facility. Construction staging will be on the EWC easement where some EWC employees now park.

¹ *Facility Program Requirements Update for Honolulu Laboratory Renewal Project*. 1998. Summit Technology and MWM Architects, Inc.

Temporary parking for these employees will be provided north of the EWC. Construction parking will be at the contractor's baseyard; workers will carpool to the site.

1.2 Project Setting

The Honolulu Laboratory is located on Dole Street, between the East-West Center and Manoa Stream. Across Dole Street are University of Hawaii dormitory buildings, and on the other side of Manoa Stream are faculty housing units. Opposite the faculty housing, along Dole Street, are the Kanewai Cultural Gardens and the Hawaiian Studies complex of the University. Hawaiian Electric Company (HECO) maintains an electrical substation behind the annex buildings. HECO's proposed Waahila Ridge 138 kV transmission line may extend past the site along Dole Street. There may be a transition from underground lines to overhead lines near the NMFS property.

The site totals 0.9 hectares [2.2 acre, 95,830 sf], although as much as one-third of the property may not be developable due to setback requirements, the Dole Street right-of-way (part of the parcel underlies Dole Street) and Manoa Stream. (The parcel actually extends to the centerline of the stream.) In 1951 the property was deeded by the Territory of Hawaii to the federal government for construction and operation of a fishery research laboratory.

The proximity of the site to the University of Hawaii graduate research faculty, students and facilities and to the Joint Institute of Marine and Atmospheric Research (JIMAR) is necessary in fulfilling the Laboratory's mission.

1.3 Goals of the Public Involvement Plan

Community interaction is an essential part of the successful development of a new NMFS Honolulu Laboratory. The goals in implementing a formal PIP for the environmental review and conceptual design of this project include the following:

- ◆ To provide a meaningful public involvement program which maximizes opportunities for interested parties to become involved in the project.
- ◆ To incorporate public knowledge, values, and input into the environmental review, conceptual project design, and potential mitigation measures.
- ◆ To provide various formats for community interaction that are effective in involving all of the interested parties.
- ◆ To ensure opportunities for various community interest groups to provide constructive input into project design and implementation.

2.0 KEY ISSUES

This section of the PIP identifies potential issues which may need to be addressed during the environmental review and conceptual design process. These issues were identified in an informal scoping study² conducted in the previous project phase, and/or are included in the environmental assessment outline as standard issues to be included in NEPA assessments. This list of issues is not necessarily complete; other issues may be discovered as the project proceeds. Identified issues include:

- ◆ Geologic hazards
- ◆ Erosion and siltation
- ◆ Water quality of Manoa Stream
- ◆ Biota of Manoa Stream
- ◆ Terrestrial flora and fauna including protected species
- ◆ Air quality, particularly during construction
- ◆ Noise, particularly during construction
- ◆ Use, storage and disposition of hazardous materials
- ◆ Aesthetics of the design
- ◆ Visual impacts
- ◆ Recreation, particularly consistency with the proposed pathway along Manoa Stream
- ◆ Traffic and parking
- ◆ Public services and utilities
- ◆ Socioeconomics
- ◆ Cultural resources

3.0 KEY COMMUNITY PARTICIPANTS

Successful development of the Honolulu Laboratory will include interaction and coordination with all of the parties potentially interested in this project. This will include federal, state, and local agencies, local public interest organizations, other organizations and individual citizens. The potentially interested parties identified in Appendix A will comprise an initial project mailing list. To this will be added an existing list of the Honolulu Laboratory's supporters and clients. The mailing list will be updated throughout the project to incorporate any individual or organization that expresses an interest in being involved in the project.

² *Informal Scoping Study: Proposed NMFS Honolulu Laboratory Facility*. 1997. Dames & Moore.

4.0 THE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

The PIP is designed to inform the community about the project and the environmental review process being followed, and to encourage meaningful community involvement and input into the environmental review and conceptual design. The PIP provides opportunities for two-way communication between the community and the project team members. Several community interaction measures have been proposed for the PIP. These include development and dissemination (primarily through newsletters) of informational materials, community open houses, and media monitoring. The following sections discuss each of the community interaction measures and describe how each accomplishes the goals identified earlier.

4.1 Background Materials

Background materials are primarily informational in nature, and can be used to educate people on the mission of NMFS and its research, permitting, and enforcement responsibilities. An example is the Honolulu Laboratory brochure. Other background materials may be project specific, such as the Final Facility Program. Additional background materials will include information on the NEPA process, the nature of and need for the project, previous studies related to the project, and other alternatives that have been considered. In addition to these general background materials, other informational materials can be produced from the primary sources to address specific issues as they arise during the project. Background materials and secondary materials derived therefrom will be used throughout the project and will be available at all public meetings.

4.2 Newsletters

Newsletters were selected rather than press releases as the vehicle for public dissemination of information. The newsletter format is more appropriate for the PIP because: 1) newsletters allow presentation of more information; 2) newsletters typically are easier to read, allowing a more “linear” development of concepts (as contrasted with the “upside down” structure of a typical press release); and 3) newsletters may have more credibility as an information source with the general public which may perceive a press release as intrinsically self-serving. Additionally, enclosure of a response card or cut-out (addressed to the COTR) will facilitate feedback from readers.

Three newsletters will be prepared and distributed to those on the mailing list. Newsletters will typically provide some background information, give an update on the current project status, announce any upcoming meetings, and provide a discussion of issues that have come up during project activities. Newsletters are a convenient means for keeping all interested parties informed about the project. Newsletters can also be used to solicit input from the public. The newsletters will be designed to contain comment sheets or cards to be mailed back to the COTR with ideas, comments, questions, and concerns. They will also serve as press releases for media distribution.

4.3 Community Open Houses (Public Information Meetings)

Community open houses, rather than public hearings or more traditional forms of public informational meetings, were chosen as the preferred forum for dialog with the community. Public hearings are legal proceedings with a rigid format, a hearings officer, court reporter, etc. They are often associated with NEPA EISs. Typically no dialog is established in a hearing. The proposed project is described and testimony is simply recorded for later consideration. It is not required that questions be answered, and this frequently leads to frustration on the part of attendees. For this reason, sometimes after the formal part of the hearing is adjourned, an informal “question and answer” session is held. Briefings to large groups and traditional public information meetings are typically similar to hearings, but more informal in style. A presentation is given and questions fielded. This format often leads to “grandstanding” by project opponents. It can also silence those reticent to speak in front of large groups of strangers or their peers with whom they disagree.

The open house format is very low-key, allowing one-on-one discussions between individual members of the public and appropriate members of the project team. The open houses will provide an opportunity for interested individuals to meet the project team face to face, to ask questions, express concerns, react to what is being proposed, and even make suggestions to the technical experts. The open house format allows for an informal exchange of information, without anyone feeling intimidated by having to speak in front of an audience.

Two community open houses (or public information meetings) will be held during the course of this phase of the project. Comment forms will be available at the open houses to allow interested parties to provide feedback on specific project. Open houses will be held in the large conference room at the NMFS Honolulu Laboratory. There will be various stations set up around the room. Stations will correspond to project elements, technical studies or issues. For example, there will be a station manned by design team members to explain the requirements which led to the facilities program. Another station will be established to discuss the results of the traffic and parking impact assessment. If necessary, information stations will also be placed in the courtyard. A station will have its own graphics to describe the issue or project element. Written comments will be collected and responded to in the EA. All comments received at the open houses (or through any other means) will be immediately directed to the Contracting Officer’s Technical Representative (COTR) for transmittal to the appropriate team member and/or discussion in the weekly project telephone conferences. Meetings are currently scheduled to take place in late January or early February. They will be held on a Thursday night from 4-8 p.m. and on a Saturday morning from 9-12 a.m. to try to accommodate a variety of personal schedules. The open house meetings will be advertised through the newspaper, project newsletters, and using various other media.

4.4 Presentations to Selected Officials, Agencies and Boards

An effective means of providing information on the project to the community and key decisionmakers is to give them focused presentations on the proposed project. Such presentations will be offered to selected elected officials, agency representatives and the neighborhood boards. At each presentation, a team consisting of the COTR, a Honolulu Laboratory representative, and a Dames & Moore representative will describe the project and answer questions. The Dames & Moore staff member will be responsible for recording minutes of the meeting. The team will provide recent newsletters and comment sheets to attendees at all presentations and will invite those attending to get involved with the project.

4.5 Monitoring the Media

Throughout the project, newspapers and other local and state publications will be reviewed for articles related to the project. All relevant articles (including letters to the editor or editorials) will be recorded for the file and copies will be routed to the COTR and the appropriate EA team members. Talk shows on local radio and television will also be monitored as closely as possible for local citizens airing views on issues related to the project. Important insights can be gained from monitoring these sources and noting the various perceptions of the project by different segments of the community. If action may be required in response to a media report, that response will be discussed in the weekly project telephone conference.

5.0 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

5.1 Implementation Plan

This section gives a brief description of how the measures described above will be incorporated into the environmental review and conceptual design process. All work products and comments received by any project team member will be immediately forwarded to the COTR. He will be the single point of contact for the public. Comments received, responses and appropriate actions will be discussed in the project team's weekly telephone conferences.

Develop Background and Informational Materials: This process is already underway. Background and other informational (secondary) materials will continue to be developed and will be used throughout the project. Although the major use of these materials will be to educate the potentially interested parties during the initial phases of the project, these materials will also be used whenever new parties become involved in the process and lack information about NMFS, the project or the NEPA process.

Newsletters: A total of three newsletters will be prepared and distributed to the project mailing list. The first newsletter will be sent out as soon as possible, and used to introduce the project and

supplement the project mailing list. The second newsletter will be mailed out about two weeks before the two open houses. It will provide information about the open houses and invite public attendance. The third newsletter will be prepared and mailed after completion of the final EA and will describe how the comments received in the process were addressed in the EA. Newsletters will be drafted by Dames & Moore and provided to the COTR for review at least two weeks prior to the mail out date. All newsletters will have comment cards or cut-outs for public response; they will be addressed to the COTR.

Community Open Houses: Two community open houses are scheduled. The open houses will be held once the draft EA is completed and available for review. Open houses will be set up as described earlier. Visitors will be greeted at the door and asked to sign in. They will be provided background and informational materials and comment forms. The greeter will describe the station setup and invite the visitors to talk to various project team members about their areas of interest. The open house format is intended to avoid the “presenter/audience” division that inhibits participation by some and encourages “grandstanding” by others. The “one-on-one” open house format will allow free and uninhibited discussion of the project. Members of the media will be welcome to participate and interact in the same way. Should a media member desire to conduct an interview, that can also be accommodated within the open house format.

Team members will meet within one week after the open house to debrief on the comments received during the meeting and discuss what actions are necessary and how best to respond to each comment. A record of each meeting and the recommended actions will be prepared by Dames & Moore and submitted to the COTR within one week of the debriefing.

Monitoring the Media: This measure is ongoing throughout the entire project. As described above, all project team members will document any media items related to the project, including advertisements, articles, letters to the editor, or any other items. All media items related to the project will be submitted to the COTR as soon as possible. Necessary consequent actions will be discussed in the weekly telephone conferences.

Presentations: Presentations will be offered to selected government officials, agencies and neighborhood boards. Each presentation will be documented in a report that summarizes the organization addressed, the project team members making the presentation, the date, location, and time of the presentation, the approximate attendance, and any presentation or handout materials used. This information will be submitted to the COTR within one week after the presentation, and discussed at the weekly telephone conference if necessary.

5.2 Project Team Members’ Responsibilities

Dames & Moore will develop informational (secondary) materials from background materials with the assistance and input of other project team members. All secondary materials will be

submitted to the COTR for review prior to distribution in any form. Dames & Moore will also write and design the newsletters. Printing and postage will be NMFS's responsibility.

Focused presentations to elected officials, agencies or neighborhood boards will be made by the COTR and representatives of the Honolulu Laboratory and Dames & Moore.

Dames & Moore will plan and manage the open houses. Materials for specific information stations at the open houses will be prepared by those team members responsible for that respective design element, study or issue. For example, project architects will prepare renderings, visual simulations, models, etc.; the traffic consultant will be responsible for production of graphics illustrating traffic impacts and mitigation measures, etc.

5.3 Schedule

Background and informational materials are being produced now. Initial work on the newsletter format and content will begin upon approval of this plan. The newsletters will be distributed approximately mid-October, mid-January and mid-March. The two open houses will be held during a one-week period in late January or early February. These two meetings will have the same content and purpose. Focused presentations to elected officials, agencies and neighborhood boards will be held during the same week to take advantage of the entire project team's simultaneous presence in Honolulu.

5.4 Documentation

Dames & Moore will maintain a written record of all public information materials, newsletters, mailing lists, meeting minutes and media items. Issues and consequent actions discussed in the weekly telephone conferences will be documented in minutes recorded and distributed by the COTR.

APPENDIX A

PARTIES TO BE CONSULTED IN DEVELOPMENT OF THE EA

FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

FEDERAL AGENCIES

Army Corps of Engineers (COE)
Coast Guard (USCG)
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
Forest Service (USFS)
Geological Survey (USGS)
National Biological Survey (NBS)
National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council

STATE OF HAWAII OFFICIALS AND AGENCIES

The Hawaii Congressional Delegation

Senator Daniel Akaka
Senator Daniel Inouye
Representative Neil Abercrombie
Representative Patsy Mink

The Governor of Hawaii

The Honorable Benjamin Cayetano

The Hawaii Legislature

Representative Sam Aiona (Makiki, Tantalus)
Representative Ed Case (Manoa)
Representative Galen Fox (Waikiki, Ala Wai)
Senator Carol Fukunaga (Makiki, Ala Moana)
Representative Kenneth Hiraki (Downtown, Ala Moana)
Senator Les Ihara (Kalahulu, Waialae)
Senator Matt Matsunaga (Waialae, Palolo)
Representative Scott Saiki (Kalahulu, Moiliili)
Representative Calvin Say (Palolo, Kaimuki)
Senator Brian Taniguchi (McCully, Moiliili)
Representative Brian Yamane (Waikiki, Kaimuki, Diamond Head)
Representative Terry Yoshinaga (Moiliili, McCully, Pawaa)

Department of Education

Department of Health

Environmental Planning Office

Clean Air Branch

Clean Water Branch

Department of Land and Natural Resources

Aquatic Resources Division

Commission on Water Resources Management

Forestry and Wildlife Division

Historic Preservation Division

Land Division

Na Ala Hele (Trails) Program

Department of Transportation

Office of Environmental Quality Control

Office of Planning

Office of Hawaiian Affairs

University of Hawaii

Administration

Center for Hawaiian Studies

Department of Oceanography

East-West Center

Environmental Center

Facilities Planning and Management

Faculty Housing Manager

School of Law

Sea Grant Program

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU AGENCIES

Mayor Jeremy Harris

City Council Chairman Mufi Hanneman

City Council Member Duke Bainum

City Council Member Andrew Mirikitani

Board of Water Supply, Planning

Department of Design and Construction

Department of Environmental Services

Department of Facility Maintenance

Department of Parks and Recreation

Department of Planning and Permitting

Department of Transportation Services

UTILITIES

Hawaiian Electric Company
Hawaiian Telephone Company
The Gas Company

LOCAL PUBLIC INTEREST ORGANIZATIONS

Ahupuaa Action Alliance
Ala Moana Residents Advisory Council
Ala Wai Marine Board
Ala Wai Watershed Community Network
Citizen Action Project
Community Vision Commission
Convention Center Community Network
Coral Reef Initiative
Discover Moiliili
Friends of the Harbor
Hawaii Association of Conservation Districts
Hawaii's 1000 Friends
Malama O Manoa
Natural Resources Defense Council
Outdoor Circle
Sierra Club
South Oahu Soil and Water Conservation District
The Nature Conservancy of Hawaii
Youth for Environmental Services

NEIGHBORHOOD BOARDS

Ala Moana
Diamond Head-Kapahulu-St. Louis Heights
Manoa
McCully-Moiliili
Palolo

RECREATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Hawaii Canoe and Kayak Team
Hawaii Canoe Racing Association

Hui Lanakila Club
Kamehameha Canoe Club
Koa Kai Canoe Club
Lokahi Canoe Club

HOMEOWNERS/INDIVIDUAL CITIZENS/UH STUDENTS

Individuals contacted in the Informal Scoping Study (derived from the Ala Wai Watershed Improvement Project mailing list) will comprise this section of the initial database. To this will be added all residents along Dole Street from University Avenue to St. Louis Heights Drive. Because the area contains University dormitories, faculty housing and rental properties, rather than mail information to owners of record, flyers will be distributed door-to-door in the immediate project area to give people an opportunity to have their names added to the project mailing list.

MEDIA

Environment Hawaii
Hawaii Public Radio
Honolulu Weekly
Ka Leo O Hawaii (UH student newspaper)
KGMB-9
KHON-TV 2
KHNL NEWS 8
KITV-4
KTUH-FM
The Honolulu Advertiser
The Honolulu Star-Bulletin